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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4578th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 July 2002, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council supports the Joint Statement of the 'Quartet', annexed to this statement, which was issued in New York on 16 July 2002 by the Secretary-General, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Secretary of State of the United States, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the High Representative for the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Commissioner for External Affairs. The Security Council appreciates also the involvement in discussions with the 'Quartet' of senior representatives of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

"The Security Council calls upon the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and all States in the region to cooperate with the efforts to achieve the goals set out in the Joint Statement and stresses the importance of, and the need to achieve, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all its relevant resolutions including its resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, the Madrid terms of reference and the principle of land for peace."

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Annex

"QUARTET" JOINT STATEMENT

Following is the text of a joint statement issued by the "Quartet" (United Nations, Russian Federation, the United States and the European Union) following their meeting in New York.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller, High Representative for European Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and European Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten met in New York today. The Quartet members reviewed the situation in the Middle East and agreed to continue close consultations, as expressed in the Madrid Declaration, to which the Quartet remains fully committed, to promote a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. The Quartet expresses its support for the convening of a further international Ministerial meeting at an appropriate time.

The Quartet deeply deplores today's tragic killing of Israeli civilians and reiterates its strong and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism, including suicide bombing, which is morally repugnant and has caused great harm to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a better future. Terrorists must not be allowed to kill the hope of an entire region, and a united international community, for genuine peace and security for both Palestinians and Israelis. The Quartet expresses once again its profound regret at the loss of innocent Israeli and Palestinian lives, and extends its sympathy to all those who have suffered loss. The Quartet members expressed their increasing concern about the mounting humanitarian crisis in Palestinian areas and their determination to address urgent Palestinian needs.

Consistent with President Bush's June 24 statement, the UN, EU and Russia express their strong support for the goal of achieving a final Israeli-Palestinian settlement which, with intensive effort on security and reform by all, could be reached within three years from now. The UN, EU and Russia welcome President Bush's commitment to active U.S. leadership toward that goal. The Quartet remains committed to implementing the vision of two states, Israel and an independent, viable and democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, as affirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 1397. The Quartet members, in their individual capacity and jointly, pledge all possible efforts to

realize the goals of reform, security and peace and reaffirm that progress in the political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution-building fields must proceed together, hand-in-hand. The Quartet reiterates its welcome of the initiative of Saudi Arabia, endorsed by the Arab League Beirut Summit, as a significant contribution towards a comprehensive peace.

To assist progress toward these shared goals, the Quartet agreed on the importance of a coordinated international campaign to support Palestinian efforts at political and economic reform. The Quartet welcomes and encourages the strong Palestinian interest in fundamental reform, including the Palestinian 100-Day Reform Program. It also welcomes the willingness of regional states and the international community to assist the Palestinians to build institutions of good government, and to create a new governing framework of working democracy, in preparation for statehood. For these objectives to be realized, it is essential that well-prepared, free, open and democratic elections take place. The new international Task Force on Reform, which is comprised of representatives of the U.S., EU, UN Secretary General, Russia, Japan, Norway, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and which works under the auspices of the Quartet, will strive to develop and implement a comprehensive action plan for reform. The inaugural meeting of this Task Force in London July 10 discussed a detailed plan including specific Palestinian commitments. It will meet again in August to review actions in areas including civil society, financial accountability, local government, the market economy, elections, and judicial and administrative reform.

Implementation of an action plan, with appropriate benchmarks for progress on reform measures, should lead to the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state characterized by the rule of law, separation of powers, and a vibrant free market economy that can best serve the interests of its people. The Quartet also commits itself to continuing to assist the parties in efforts to renew dialogue, and welcomes in this regard the recent high-level ministerial meetings between Israelis and Palestinians on the issues of security, economics and reform.

The Quartet agreed on the critical need to build new and efficient Palestinian security capabilities on sound bases of unified command, and transparency and accountability with regard to resources and conduct. Restructuring security institutions to serve these goals should lead to improvement in Palestinian security performance, which is essential to progress on other aspects of institutional transformation and realization of a Palestinian state committed to combating terror.

In this context, the Quartet notes Israel's vital stake in the success of Palestinian reform. The Quartet calls upon Israel to take concrete steps to support the emergence of a viable Palestinian state. Recognizing Israel's legitimate security concerns, these steps include immediate measures to ease the internal closures in certain areas and, as security improves through reciprocal steps, withdrawal of Israeli forces to their pre-September 28, 2000 positions. Moreover, frozen tax revenues should be released. In this connection, a

more transparent and accountable mechanism is being put into place. In addition, consistent with the Mitchell Committee's recommendations, Israel should stop all new settlement activity. Israel must also ensure full, safe and unfettered access for international and humanitarian personnel.

The Quartet reaffirms that there must be a negotiated permanent settlement based on UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. There can be no military solution to the conflict; Israelis and Palestinians must address the core issues that divide them, through sustained negotiations, if there is to be real and lasting peace and security. The Israeli occupation that began in 1967 must end, and Israel must have secure and recognized borders. The Quartet further reaffirms its commitment to the goal of a comprehensive regional peace between Israel and Lebanon, and Israel and Syria, based upon Resolutions 242 and 338, the Madrid terms of reference, and the principle of land for peace.

The Quartet looks forward to upcoming consultations with the Foreign Ministers of Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other regional partners, and determines to continue regular consultation on the situation in the Middle East at the principals' level. The Quartet envoys will continue their work on the ground to support the work of the principals, to assist the Task Force on Reform, and to aid the parties in resuming a political dialogue in order to reach a solution to the core political questions.